

Acid Rain Could Destroy Your Car

Acid rain and other forms of pollution can destroy a car that goes unprotected, says Steven Joseph, author of a new book on auto body rust.

"That's because nitric and sulfuric acids eat away a car's surfaces, leaving it vulnerable to corrosion." At the same time, other chemicals in the environment, such as road salts, adhere to a car's underside and absorb moisture, dirt and other elements that foster rust.

The U.S. dumps more salts on its roads than any other country in the world — more than 20 billion pounds a year, says Joseph. In fact, because pollution has reached such a large scale in the U.S., it may overcome even the best new car designs.

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"Contrary to popular belief, the factory warranties (on automobiles) are not blanket guarantees against rust. Most spell out specific requirements the owner must meet to maintain coverage. One manufacturer even specifically excludes corrosion caused by industrial pollution."

One warranty requirement is periodic washes of the car's underbody — sometimes as often as once a month. Other preventive tactics can also prolong the life of a car, says Joseph. They include washing the entire car regularly, keeping a protective layer of wax on the surface, storing the car properly, and repairing surface imperfections promptly.

Joseph offers these and other tips on rust prevention in "Rust: How To Keep It From Destroying Your Car," a 218-page book for owners of new, used or classic cars. Besides

preventive tactics, the book offers advice on rust repair, rustproofing, warranties, auto safety, and anti-rust chemicals and coatings.

It is written in layman's language for the average car owner. "Until now, there has been very little non-technical information available for car owners," says Joseph. "And the information that has been available is scattered among dozens of different sources and usually written by chemists or engineers."

Joseph's background as a car collector and his experience in auto restoration make him a qualified authority on the subject of rust, but he considers himself primarily just another concerned collector.

"Most people don't realize that even new cars are vulnerable to the ravages of rust — even with new technology. My book attempts to fill the information gap," he says.

The 5½-by-8½ soft-cover edition is available for \$19.95 from War Hill Press, 514 Bay Street, Box 424, Staten Island, NY 10304.

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